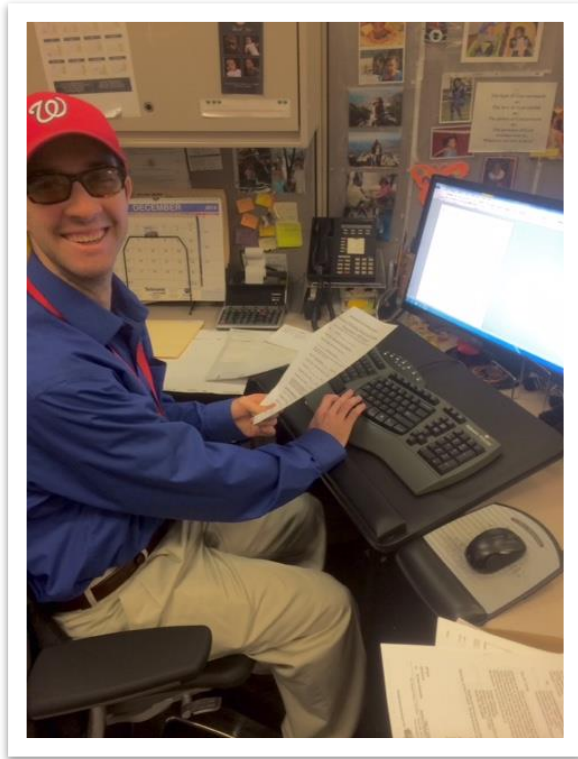


EMPLOYMENT FIRST



Employment First is a concept to facilitate the full inclusion of people with the most significant disabilities in the workplace and community. Under the Employment First approach, community-based, integrated employment is the first option for employment services for youth and adults with significant disabilities.

The Developmental Disabilities Administration is committed to enhancing community employment options for persons with developmental disabilities. The guiding principle of Employment First is that all individuals who want to work can work and contribute to their community when given opportunity, training, and supports that build upon their unique talents, skills and abilities. Everyone of working age, and those supporting them, should consider employment as the first option prior to any other service options.

As fully participating members of their community, individuals with developmental disabilities will be afforded the opportunity to earn a living wage and engage in work that makes sense to them. Career exploration and planning will be supported when assisting individuals in making informed choices in designing their unique pathway to increased independence, integration, inclusion, productivity, self-determination.